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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/608,123	06/30/2000	Martin J. Pagel	1817P	1033

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EXAMINER	
COLIN, CARL G	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2136	

DATE MAILED: 11/16/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/608,123	PAGEL, MARTIN J.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Carl Colin	2136	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *14 June 2004* .

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-31* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-31* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *30 June 2000* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11)☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a)☐ approved b)☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ .
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: .

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. In response to communications filed on 6/14/2004, applicant amends claims 1, 2, 4, 10-19, and 28. The following claims 1-31 are presented for examination.

2. The amendments to the specification and the claims, filed on 6/14/2004 have been considered and the objection has been withdrawn with respect to the amendment.

2.1 Applicant's remarks, pages 13-16, filed on 6/14/2004, with respect to the rejection of claims 1-31 have been fully considered but they are not fully persuasive. Applicant argues that Gravell does not teach verification keys grouped based on geographic destination and assigned to indicia generating device group as amended. However, the cited prior art, Cordery, refers to a related US Patent 5,812,666 to Baker et al., which is assigned to the same assignee for the disclosure of verification key distribution according to geographic distribution and for the disclosure of keys assigned to corresponding device group. Therefore, upon further consideration, a new ground of rejection is made in view of Baker et al. in combination with the cited references from the previous Office action.

Regarding the dependent claims, other claim limitations not challenged by Applicant still apply in this Office Action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3.1 **Claims 1-31** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 5,812,666 to **Baker et al.** in view of US Patent 6,295,359 to **Cordery et al.**.

3.2 **As per claims 1, 2, 7, 10, 11, 16, 19, 20, 25, and 28, Baker et al.** substantially teaches method for dispensing and evidencing indicia by an indicia generating device in a system having a plurality of indicia generating devices that have been divided into n groups, each group corresponding a respective geographic designation each of the indicia generating devices for generating and printing indicia on a media that is to be received at a plurality of establishments, wherein the establishments are associated with different geographic designations, the method performed by the indicia generating devices comprising: (a) receiving a set of verification keys from among a plurality of verification keys, wherein each one of the received verification keys in the set is encrypted as a function of one of the respective geographic designations and assigned to corresponding device group, for example (see column 17, lines 28-36 and column 18, lines 20-

35). **Baker et al.** also discloses encrypting key information as a function of the same geographic designation used to encrypt the corresponding verification key, that meets the recitation of receiving key IDs and receiving indicia numbers associated with keys that meet the recitation of key Ids and is encrypted as a function of the same geographic designation used to encrypt the corresponding verification key, for example (see column 7, line 16 through column 8; column 17, line 28 through and column 18, line 35 and column 9, line 55 through column 10, line 33; see also column 12); (c) in response to receiving a request to generate an indicium for a medium destined for a particular one of the establishments, evidencing the indicium by (i) generating one of the verification keys and the corresponding key ID assigned to indicia generating device's group based on the geographic designation associated with the particular establishment, for example (see column 7, line 16 through column 8; column 17, line 28 through and column 18, line 35; column 17, line 28 through and column 18, line 35 and column 9, line 55 through column 10, line 33 also see abstract), and (ii) **Baker et al.** also discloses the use public key and digital signature which is well known in the art for generating indicia (see for example column 2) that meets the recitation of using the generated verification key to create a digital signature, and digitally signing the indicia by including the digital signature and the generated key ID in the indicia , for example (see column 7, line 16 through column 8; column 17, line 28 through and column 18, line 35; column 17, line 28 through and column 18, line 35 and column 9, line 55 through column 10, line 33). To one skilled in the art of cryptography, encrypting the key ID does not depart from the spirit and scope of the invention disclosed by **Baker et al.**.

Generating keys using asymmetric encryption is notoriously well known in the art. **Cordery et al.** in an analogous art teaches (a) receiving a public master key and a key matrix

that meets the recitation of receiving a master secret key K and a secret key K_i (see column 6, lines 39-63); and (d) computing a key ID I_i^{Dest} as a function of the master secret key K (see column 6, lines 58-63). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the method of **Baker et al.** to provide a master secret key and a secret key and computing the verification keys as a function of the secret key and the postal destination, and computing the key IDs assigned to the group as a function of the master secret key and the postal destination as taught by **Cordery et al.**. This modification would have been obvious because one skilled in the art would have been motivated by the suggestions provided by **Cordery et al.** so as to provide secure processing for generating postal indicia.

As per claims 3, 12, and 21, Baker et al. discloses the limitation of generating and printing indicia for postage on a mail piece that is to be received at a plurality of distribution centers, for example (see column 2).

As per claims 4, 13, and 22, Baker et al. discloses the limitation of verifying the indicia at a destination distribution center, for example (see column 2).

As per claims 5, 9, 14, 18, 23, and 27, Cordery et al. discloses the limitation of verifying the indicia at an originating distribution center (see column 7, lines 1-12) and discloses the limitation of verifying the indicia upon receipt at the particular establishment by using the key ID on the indicia and the distributed verifications keys to compute a digital signature, and

comparing the computed digital signature with the digital signature on the indicia (see column 7, lines 1-12). Therefore, these claims are rejected on the same rationale as the rejection of claims claims 1, 10, and 19 above.

Claims 6, 8, 15, 17, 24, and 26, Baker et al. discloses the same inventive concept as claims 1, 10, and 19 above and are rejected on the same rationale as the rejection of these claims.

As per claims 29 and 31, Baker et al. substantially teaches using any cryptographic method. **Cordery et al.** in an analogous art teaches computing keys with a one-way function (see column 5 line 35 et seq.) and computing key ID's as a one-way function of the master secret key *K* (see column 6, lines 39-63). Therefore, these claims are rejected on the same rationale as the rejection of the independent claims above.

As per claim 30, Baker et al. discloses the limitation of using ZIP codes to designate the postal destination (see columns 1-2).

Conclusion

4. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO

MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

4.1. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure as the art discloses a multiple device key exchange using asymmetric encryption.

US Patents: 6,636,968 Rosner et al. 6,567,794 Cordery et al.

4.2 Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Carl Colin whose telephone number is 571-272-3862. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday, 8:00-6:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ayaz Sheikh can be reached on 571-272-3795. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.

Carl Colin
Patent Examiner
November 9, 2004

AYAZ SHEIKH
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100